

# Morning Star XI

1870  
1871

# THE MORRIS 1933-1934 VOL. XI STARR

"The time has come," the walrus said, "To talk of many things: of shoes - and ships - and sealing-wax - of cabbages - and kings - and why the sea is boiling hot - And whether pigs have wings."

-- Lewis Carroll

## **THE MORNING STAR STAFF...**

### **CO-EDITORS**

ANDREW HEIDGERKEN  
AND  
SARA SMITH

### **GRAPHIC EDITOR**

MARCUS MADISON

### **TYPING STAFF**

ANDREW HEIDGERKEN  
MARCUS MADISON  
DEREK REICHERT  
SARA SMITH  
JESSIE WEHLAGE

### **OTHER MORNING STAR STAFF MEMBERS**

ADRIENNE BRADLEY  
MARCUS CASTLE  
GINA DUNN  
ANGELA TAGUE

### **ADVISOR**

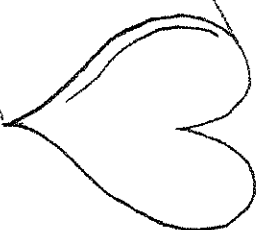
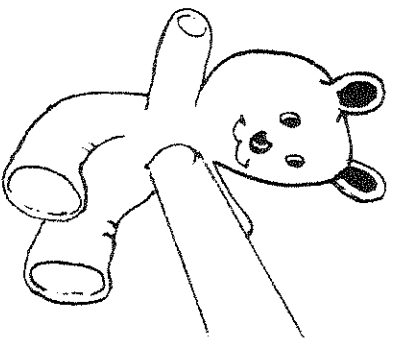
MR. GENE CONRAD

THANKS TO THE YEARBOOK STAFF FOR THEIR HELP IN TYPING.

FROM

THE

HEART



Tingling joy fills my ears  
 a sensation  
     never matched  
     by material pleasure  
 a ray of sunshine  
     a glint of hope  
 Fingers fly  
     over smooth glossy wood  
     Kissing cool silver keys  
 Air spins faster-  
     faster still!  
     perfect tones straight from my heart  
 Questioning phrases fill the room  
     for a moment  
     phrases are answered in perfect time  
 Fingers faster  
     blood pounding in the ears  
     Tongue and breath in perfect time  
 A breath is taken-  
     the pride is too much  
 It bursts from my chest  
     Spinning through the horn  
 Dignity silences the room  
     my cheeks smart with pride  
 I rise from my chair  
     breaking the trance  
 The judge gives his thanks  
     knowing he can't smile  
 His eyes say enough

by Emily Peterson



Assumptions  
 You assume that I love you-  
 But you are wrong  
 You assume that I'll always be there-  
 But I haven't got the time  
 You assume that I can understand you  
 and know what you are feeling,  
 Thinking  
 But I am in a world of confusion  
 You rely on me to see things through  
 to be perfect  
 and to stand by your side  
 I can only be the reflection in the mirror  
 and not a mirage  
 Shanna Haugland



## FIRE

there was a fire glowing in the dark,  
it started from a tiny spark,  
That soon erupted into love,  
like an angel from above,  
it came from somewhere far away,  
a treasure hidden for many years,  
has now been opened by your tears,  
as we kiss, your lips on mine,  
I wish I could stay till the end of time,  
by the light of the fire I see in your eyes,  
The night you left part of me died,  
I told you that I never lied,  
but now our fire has burned in vain,  
and my heart lays here spread open freshly slain,

Chris Ruggles

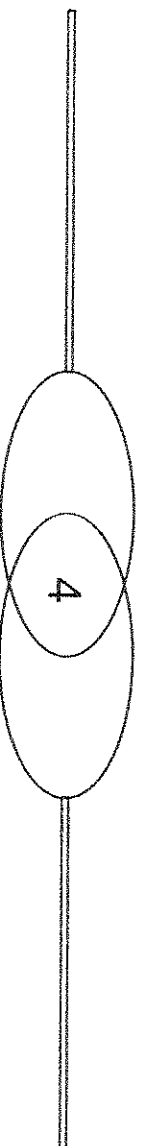


Never forget when we first met  
We only met  
for one brief moment.  
I'll never forget  
the twinkle of your eye  
or the sparkle of your smile.

Our hands shook,  
we exchanged hellos,  
and that's when you took  
my heart away.  
For as long as I live,  
truly, I will never forget that day.

That's when we first met,  
I'll never, never forget.

Cathryn Chereck







## A Story

"The careless disregard  
Of one held so dear  
Carried away my heart  
And filled my soul with fear."

"Unfortunate turns  
Down a two-way street  
Brought someone new  
For that true love to meet."

"Carried away  
Helpless with desire  
Didn't keep me  
From feeling the fire."

A duel to the death  
Or so I was told,  
By a nameless friend  
With no one to hold.

By Sara Smith



## Continue On

Happy thoughts wash ashore, but fade  
like the setting sun.  
Ending another day, I wonder what the  
hell went wrong.

I try not to think but the random thoughts  
torture me until I finally abandon them.  
Do you think there is such a thing as eter-  
nal love?

I do, but when someone you love leaves  
a part of you goes with it.

To find a piece to fill the missing void in  
my life is hard.

Have fun while it lasts and enjoy all the  
memories.

Oh don't mind me I'll get over her.  
Moping around isn't the key.

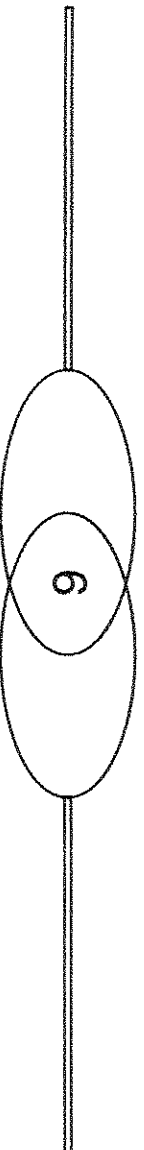
Peace is the key.

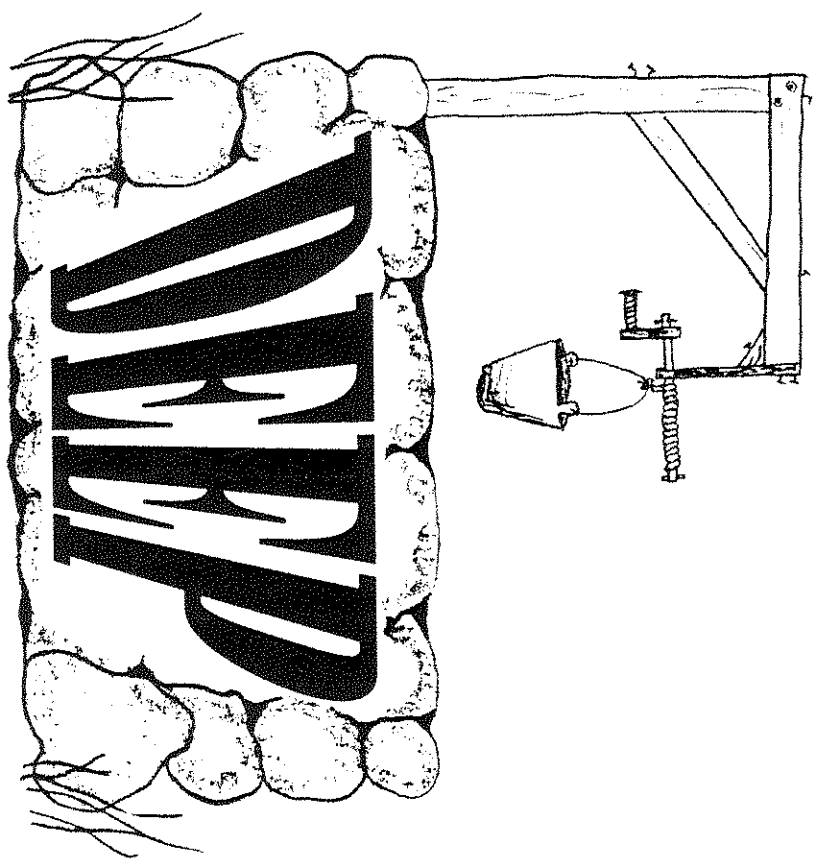
Soul and mind must be one, go for the  
dreams you have.

On the horizon the sun is rising and the  
day is new.

Now is the time to seize the day, continue  
on.

Dan Davis





## Discrimination

A burning cross,  
Men wearing white  
They come to kill  
And not just to fight.

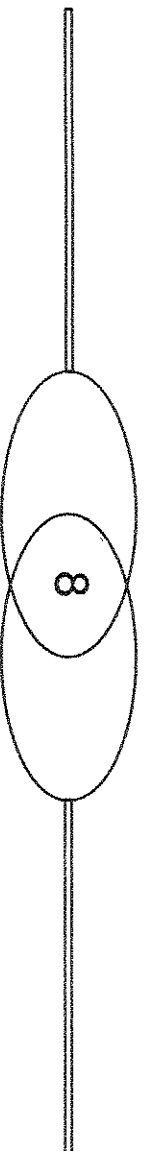
It's not just the blacks  
But every single race  
People are dying  
Because of the color of their face.

When will it end  
Does anyone know?  
If it doesn't stop  
Where will they all go?

Some don't call  
As long as it isn't them  
But don't they know  
It will be in the end.

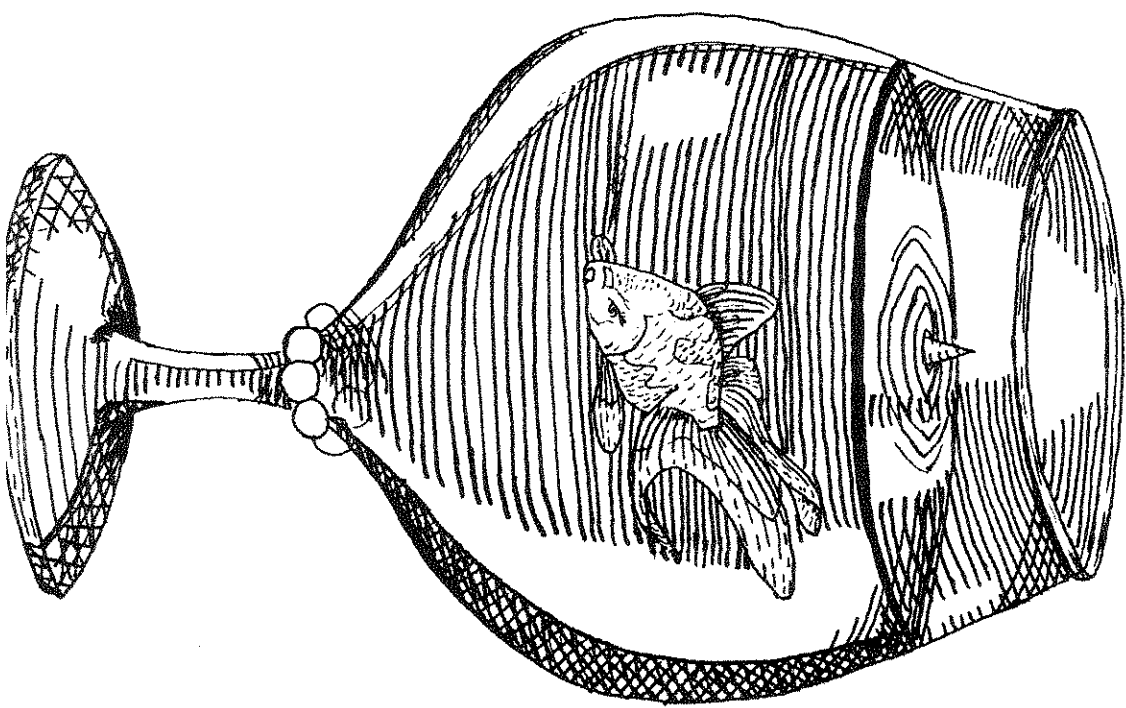
I didn't do it  
Everyone said  
But they're only lying  
And messing with your head.

Donna Brandt



The one I loved so very dear,  
has left me now and I do fear,  
my life is gone no longer to be,  
show me the reason, I must see,  
why with all this pain and strife,  
did someone have to take my wife,  
now riding through this countryside,  
I search, I've found nothing, so still I ride,  
with my horse, my only friend,  
I wish my wife to come back again,  
But she is gone and I ride on  
so many miles I have gone,  
I feel as though my body dies,  
it's as though I hear its painful cries,  
with none to carry on,  
It seems they killed my only son,  
How I wish he were by my side,  
He fought well at least he tried,  
If I could have just seen their hideous  
faces,  
I would have put them in their rightful  
places,  
Alas, I was gone, I wasn't there,  
Now all I have is a lock of her hair.

by Chris Ruggles



Art.

### Poem

The wall, divides us all, through thin and tall  
Through Life and death  
Through Love and Hate  
The wall.  
The wall, divides black or white  
The wall, divides different worlds  
The wall,  
The wall, of red bricks  
The wall, of death  
The wall,  
The wall of eternal life  
The wall of objects.  
The wall,  
The wall, stands for the boundary,  
The boundary to freedom,  
The wall,  
The wall, in way of child's harm,  
The child ever so soft,  
The wall,  
The wall, blocks his path, of eternal life.  
The wall, effects us all  
The wall.

Dan Dickey



### Violence Around the World

Guns, Knives, fights!  
That's the way of the world today.  
Teenagers killing teenagers,  
kids killing kids,  
adults killing adults,  
that's the way of the world today.  
Violence in the streets,  
violence in the alleys,  
violence in the homes,  
that's the way of the world today.  
The more we pray the more they slay;  
the more we hope the more their doped.  
That's the way of the world today.  
Screams here, chills there, fear is every-  
where.  
That's the way of the world today!

Gina Dunn

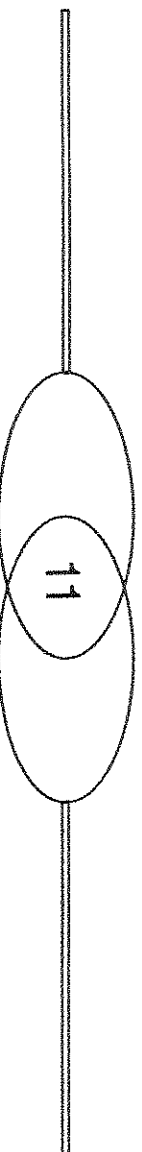
## Old Man

Old man there you sit  
and ponder your fate  
You're no longer young  
your worries too late  
I look in your eyes  
so wise and so deep  
The life they have seen  
the secrets they keep  
A life that is filled  
with the warmth of the past  
But into the darkness  
these things you have cast  
Your hair turned to snow  
from your brow to your beard  
When young and alive  
there was nothing you feared  
And now all your hopes  
have given to age  
Your life lays before you  
a dry faded page  
You sit there and wait  
for you know you can't stay  
Await for the wind  
to take you away.

Michelle Bishop

The rain fell fast as the night drew close at hand.  
The darkness came and covered up the land.  
The stars were gone and all was bleak and dank.  
The hopes that rose with the sun, fell as it sank.  
The memories came flooding from the past.  
Through all the darkness, only dreams will last.  
My tears of the retold the pains of heart.  
Though through the days my life's been torn apart.  
I wish the sun would break through overhead.  
To take me from the dark where I was lead.  
The thoughts of light that danced within my head.  
Turned cold and empty like my lonely bed.  
So now I sit, and all has faded black,  
I realize now, there's noway to come back

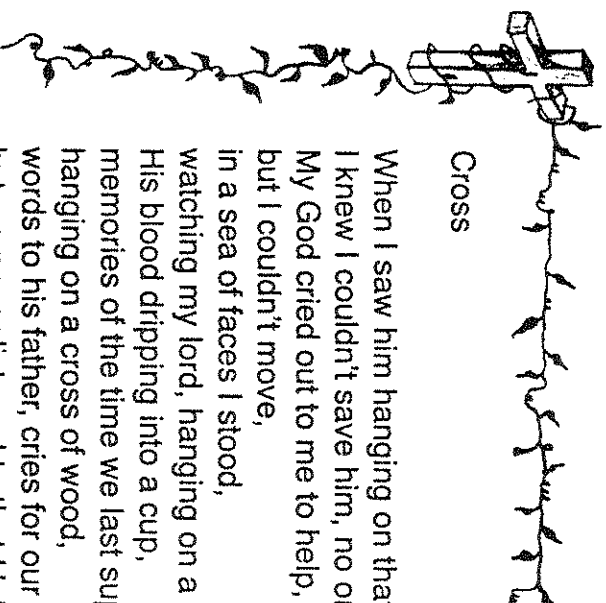
Josh DePover





Scenes of my mother abandoning me  
is it real or just a dream  
I crash into reality, a lead weight falling down  
enfolded into morality, sink, swim or drown  
back down into the grey  
a slowly progressing scene of loveliness  
turning to darkness and bitterness a horror  
back to lilting notes of music sweet and divine  
through gaping doorways, portals of mine  
images of the dead alive in my mind  
it's good, now bad, from happy to sad  
a journey to where my last conscious thought  
stood  
go to sleep with the light on, afraid of the night  
awakened to the dark, to a sound unheard  
try to get back, to resume my serenity  
at dawn I still sleep now afraid of the day  
the sound comes again and the dreams melt  
away.

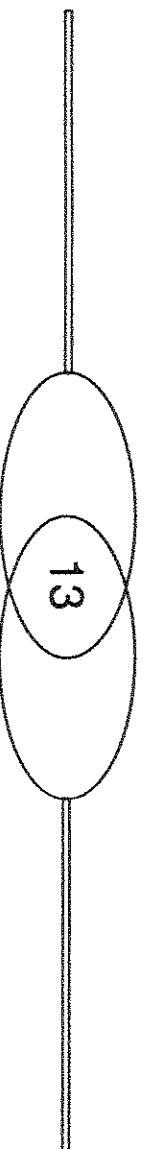
By: Kathy Howard



### Cross

When I saw him hanging on that cross of wood,  
I knew I couldn't save him, no one could,  
My God cried out to me to help,  
but I couldn't move,  
in a sea of faces I stood,  
watching my lord, hanging on a cross of wood,  
His blood dripping into a cup,  
memories of the time we last supped,  
hanging on a cross of wood,  
words to his father, cries for our souls,  
but we never listened to that Holy man.  
Hanging on a cross of wood.

Chris Ruggles





# BRIGHT SUNSHINY DAY

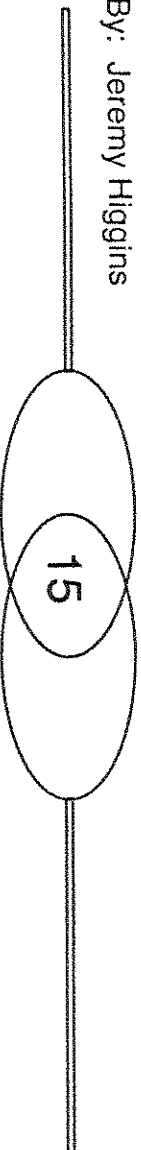




### That one star

Those people down there  
They see me and wonder  
Those over there  
They see me and say "a star"  
Those in that  
they see me curse  
Those by that  
they see me wish  
There are all kinds of people under me  
I see them all.  
I know their hopes and dreams  
I see them all.  
There are those who look up  
I know them all.  
Some ask for answers  
I know them all.  
The only answer I don't know is  
Why does he paint.  
He looked at me and sighed  
That one star.  
He looked closer and yelled  
Inspiration.  
He dropped his box and fell to the scoured  
Then he passed his gaze to his picture and  
painted.

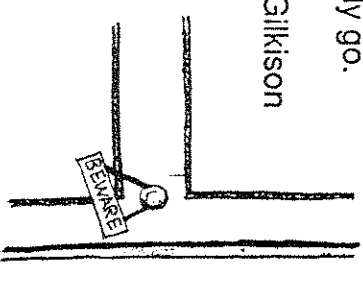
By: Jeremy Higgins



### The Clothes in My Room

Clothes. Clothes  
they're everywhere  
in my closet  
on my chair.  
I have them stacked  
against my wall  
and over half of them  
are too small.  
Where to put them  
I really don't know  
but most of them  
could probably go.

Brant Gilkison



## Dreams

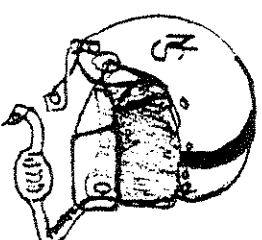
Dreams are what make the world go round.  
Dreams inspire us to aim high,  
to work harder,  
to make us what we are  
and what we will be later.

Dreams change from time to time and so do people,  
sometimes things happen that make your dreams  
out of reach or seem impossible to accomplish.

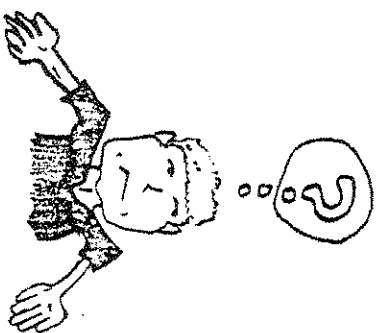
I too know how it goes,  
but as long as you keep focused on what you want,  
you'll get there.

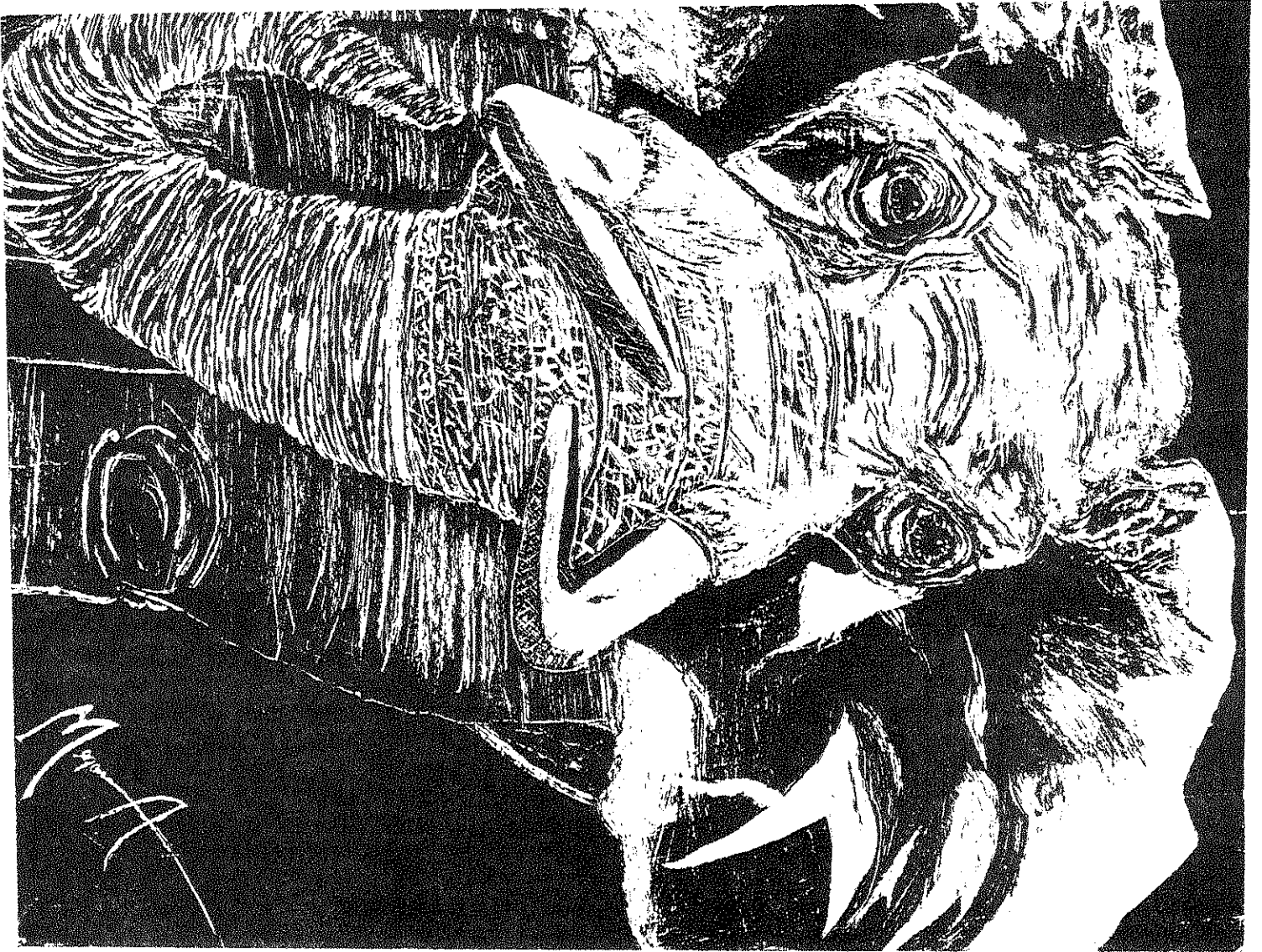
I've found new dreams now,  
but I haven't forgot the old ones either!

Heath Pacha  
an ex-football  
player who also  
had dreams of  
going on!



OH,  
YEAH...





## MERCEDES

There once was a girl named Mercedes.  
Who dazzled the men and the ladies  
Flying through the air with beauty and ease.  
She was the star of the flying trapeze.  
People came from miles around.  
Until the day she hit the ground.  
Now it's known among strangers and friends.  
That dear little Mercedes... bends.

by Dan Davis

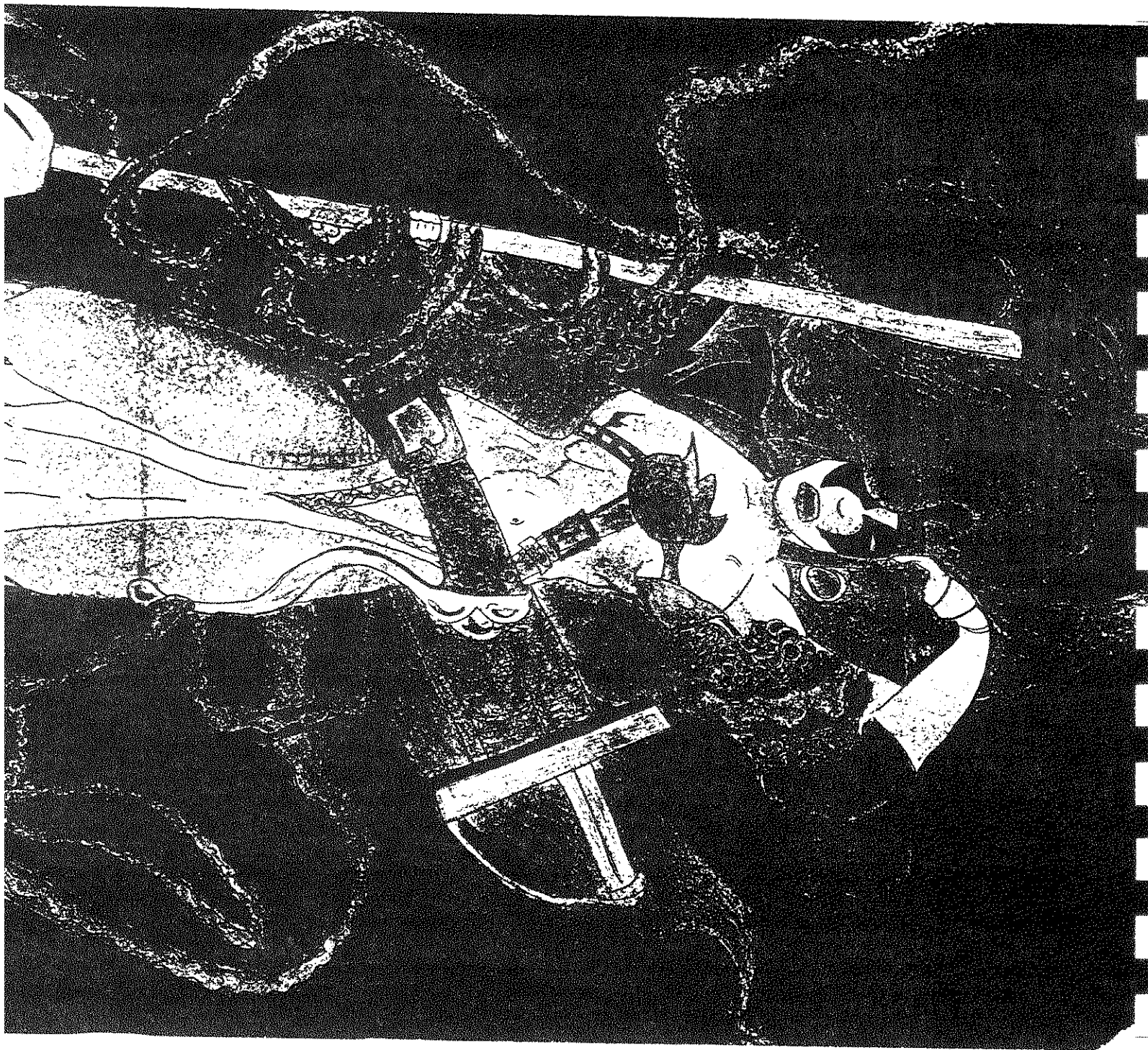
The cave of fear  
Is very near  
Step inside and take a ride  
Painted faces on the mountain side  
Tears rolling down the cheeks  
Water falling from the peaks  
Tortured spirits creaming Rage  
Cursed to time in this cage.

Anonymous

We have only presumption  
In light of the consumption  
Of the fatal combustion  
The effects of the malfunction  
Which caused unruly desertion  
Of all lives perversion.

Anonymous





sands of time so basic and plain  
screams of tomorrow that have no names  
a shortness of breath  
to lead us to death  
while the blackbird sings of rejoicing  
there is no street that can not be walked  
but the lights continue to grow dimmer  
can you see your way or will you lead astray  
there is no sun to shine  
I look to the face and I see no race but there is  
always a looser  
green grass will grow but only when it snows  
and you can see no  
progression  
i ask for a cup so that i might drink but do you  
think i am thirsty  
wonder why must we bleed when we all cry  
can you see a picture that you  
aren't in  
hope is a word  
like the stars that twinkle in the midnight of  
your eyes  
my tears are so sweet  
mom apple pie can't be beat  
so why does the moon enlighten me.

Herb Sawyer

### Ode to a Monster

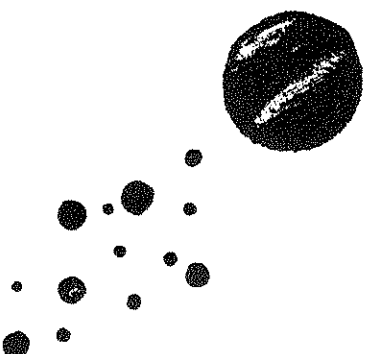
A monster once lurked beneath my bed,  
unfortunately now I believe he is dead.  
Mommy and Daddy say he is there,  
but I think they're just aiming to scare.  
A monster once lurked beneath my bed,  
and now I'm sure he's definitely dead.  
I dangled my foot at the end of my bed,  
and last but not least the top of my head.

Now a new monster lurks beneath my bed,  
and this monster is a bit meaner, I suppose,  
cause now I'm missing a few of my  
favorite toes.

A monster now lurks beneath my bed,  
and I really, really wish this monster  
were dead.

Derek Reichert





### A Spot

A spot on the ground, a spot on the tree.  
A spot on the house, even a spot on me.  
A spot over here, a spot over there,  
I think there's a spot bloody well everywhere.  
I'm wondering what these spots could be,  
maybe even some sick strange disease.  
So if you see a spot I think you should hide,  
burn your clothing, and throw them outside.  
On the other hand, you could just ignore them,  
they'll probably go away.

Derek Reichert

### Deadly Intent

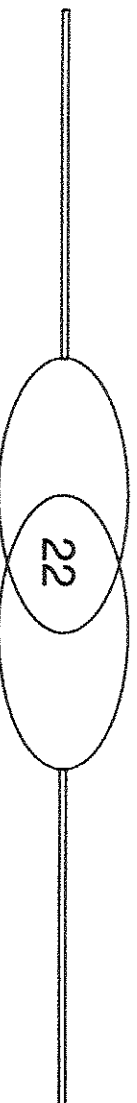
A silvery glint  
In the eye of a snake  
Greedy for gold  
The claim has been staked.

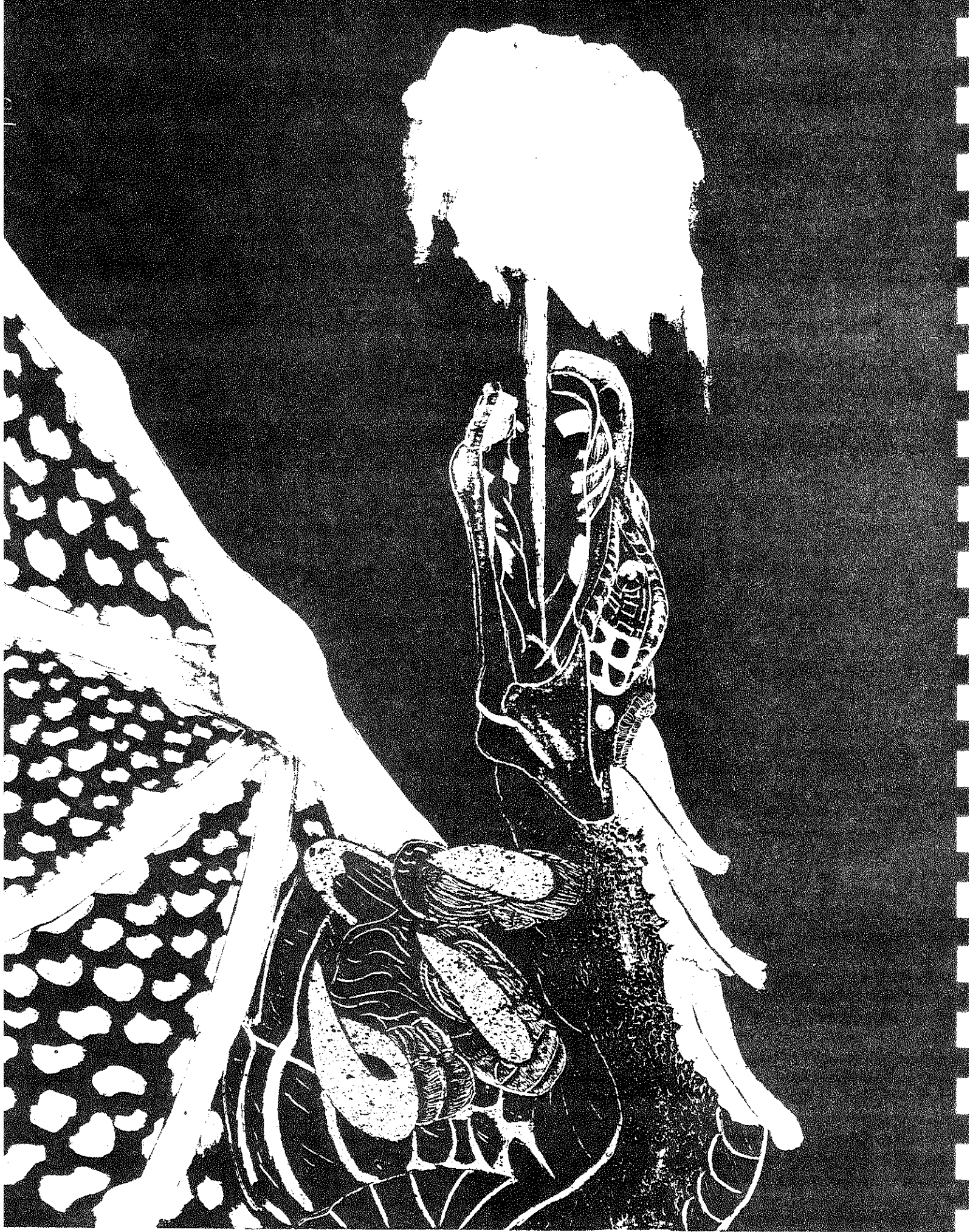
She hid from his gaze,  
It was deadly with intent  
Reaching and grasping  
An unlawful experiment.

A shout of triumph,  
A scream of pain,  
She lay there lifeless  
And he went insane.

Guilt ruled his mind,  
"Set me free!"  
Finally it did,  
When he ran headfirst into a tree.

by Sara Smith






## Unbeknownst

The endless feelings of words in vain,  
Prey and wish for ceasing pain.  
The moving horror protruding flesh,  
Fragments yielding a forbidden mesh.  
Perfecting silence an fruitless task,  
Faces hidden behind a grotesque mask.  
The protective feeling of insomniac death,  
A constant lack of crucial breath.  
Sometimes we think we are accident prone,  
Injuries last until a fearful groan.  
Timeless eternity is present, my dear,  
It all will end with a grasp of fear.  
You want us to think you had died,  
We all had mourned, we all had cried.  
We scope the spot where you all had lain,  
Inside our hearts we know it's insane.  
Some will say you are deceased,  
But your casket linen still lay creased.  
Yet now you're gone, you went for a swim,  
Little did you know the results would be grim.  
Next morning we found you on the shore,  
Breathless, lifeless, forever no more.  
All our days there will be no sound,  
You are lifeless for you have drowned.

Your smile no longer will warm my heart,  
Thank God my love you did depart.  
Though in our hearts you have resigned,  
And there you rest, forever confined.  
In a place where all beings wear masks,  
And children never cry to do their tasks.  
Souls cry out to stop the pain,  
Until our tears plummet like rain.  
For a love that is lost, a love that lies,  
You love someone until the special one dies.  
You are gone from our lives, until one night,  
When all shall make their endless plight.  
To our forever eternal place,  
Where no one can ever mock our race.  
Our creed, nor our holy vows.  
As one we'll rest beneath the boughs,  
Telling our tales of our wishful dreams.  
Where no one can hear our pathetic screams.  
Of terror, of fear, of that unknown,  
Until one day when we all have flown.  
Away from earth, away from dust,  
When our minds will no longer be a must.  
Think of our beloved and weep,  
And pray for our never ceasing sleep.  
And so the night I cry away,  
Praying you'll ever leave today.

Karen Rhodes



# SHORT STORIES

## Blespor's Surprise

"I don't know what we're going to do this year," cried Santa. "The house is not completely decorated without mistletoe for the doorways and there is no mistletoe left in the North Pole." His look turned to Blespor. "Have any ideas, Blespor?" asked Santa. "B-b-boy," stuttered Blespor. Many different ideas raced through his mind. He hated it when Santa put him on the spot like this.

"I think I heard that there is a surplus of mistletoe in Blustaria. Someone could make a trip and pick up some mistletoe," suggested Blespor.

"Ho, ho, ho! What a great idea," exclaimed Santa. "You'd better get some sleep for your long walk tomorrow."

"Me? Walk? That's twenty miles away," shouted Blespor. "I was perhaps thinking that that certain someone would take a sled and some reindeer with them."

Santa said, "The deer need their rest for the big ride on Christmas Eve. I'm afraid you'll have to walk alone."

"But, Santa. I have many presents left to make and wrap before the day after tomorrow. If I have to walk to Blustaria, I might not have enough time to finish the

toys," Blespor complained.

"Blespor, you are my best elf. I have faith that you will make it back here on time, with the mistletoe," assured Santa. He continued, "If not, many children will not have a merry Christmas. Besides you have to help me deliver the presents."

The next day, Blespor started the long journey, without reindeer, to Blustaria. He knew he would lose Santa's and many children's faith if he did not return on time.

He left the North Pole at 6:00 in the morning. He packed some of Mrs. Claus' food and an extra sweater, in case he got cold.

Blespor knew the way to Blustaria very well. Many of his elf friends lived there and Blespor liked to visit with them often. See, Blespor was an excellent listener. It was because of his great listening skills that Santa liked him so well. Since the folks of Blustaria loved to tell stories, Blespor would love to listen.

The snow felt great underneath Blespor's feet. It was a crunchy-type snow, the kind that was perfect for making snowmen. Blespor really didn't mind walking to Blustaria, he just wished it wasn't the day before Christmas Eve.

By mid-afternoon, Blespor's stomach was growling like a mighty bear. He decided to stop for lunch. The

food went down fast, but definitely hit the spot. Lunch included: venison sandwiches, potato wedges, and some hot cocoa, which he kept stored in the thermos bottle he received last year for Christmas.

Blespor started on his journey once again, this time picking up the pace a bit.

The sun began to set around 6:00, which meant Blespor had traveled for 12 hours. Blespor decided he needed a break, and so he sat to watch the sun say good night. The colors displayed looked like a waterpaint set; with all the colors mixed together, yet still retaining their separate hues.

He reached his friend Wilzor's house by 9:00. Blespor knocked on the door.

"Blespor, my friend. Long time, no see. Please enter," greeted Wilzor. Wilzor was an elf who could compete with Santa for the largest belly in all of the North Pole. He was a jolly elf with a heart of gold.

"Thank you," returned Blespor. "Wilzor, I was hoping I might be able to spend the night tonight in your home. Santa sent me on this trip at the last minute and I was unable to make reservations at the Blustaria Inn."

"Why Blespor! You're home is my home. Please make yourself comfortable," Wilzor said, offering him a seat on the davenport. "My wife, Isabella, has baked some great apple strudels, if you'd like to have one."

Following his elf impulse, Blespor eagerly agreed and devoured the strudel.

"That was great - even down to the very last crumb," stated Blespor.

"Come, Blespor. Let's sit near the fireplace," said Wilzor. To Blespor, the fire was the best thing he had seen all day. Fire meant warmth, which he did not have much of today. The rays of heat enveloped his body, making him feel a little sleepy.

"So what brings you to Blustaria?" asked Wilzor.

"A shortage of mistletoe at the North Pole," replied Blespor. "Santa sent me to fetch some for his house. You know how Santa gets about having his mistletoe."

"Sure do. Why, he's the one who started the 'kissing under the mistletoe' tradition," revealed Wilzor.

"I didn't know that. See, that's why I love coming to Blustaria - I learn something new every time I come," said Blespor, his curiosity growing. "How did it all come about?"

"It happened many years ago, when Santa first started dating Mrs. Claus. He needed an excuse to kiss her, so while they were walking under some mistletoe, he told her that you were supposed to kiss under the mistletoe. Being that he was Santa, she believed him and they kissed.

"When they got home that night, she told her

friends about this new tradition. Let me tell you, there was more kissing in the North Pole after that," said Wilzor.

"I'll have to remember that," said Blespor as he started to yawn. "I should hit the sack. I've got a long walk ahead of me tomorrow."

"Tomorrow I'll get you up early so we can find the best mistletoe for Santa. Then you can start your journey home," Wilzor said. He paused for a moment and then said, "Wait. Did you say 'long walk'? What happened to the deer?"

"Santa wouldn't let me bring them, since it was too close for Christmas. He said the deer needed their rest," said Blespor.

"That doesn't sound like something Santa would say. I'm sure he could have spared one deer for your journey," said Wilzor.

"Probably so. I was a bit upset that he made me get the mistletoe when I have so much to do at the toy factory. And what about my rest? I'm helping Santa deliver all his presents on Christmas Eve," said Blespor.

It was then that Wilzor had to turn around so Blespor wouldn't see him smile. Yesterday, right after Blespor left for Blustaria, Santa called Wilzor. Santa and the reindeer wanted to throw a surprise party to thank Blespor for all his hard work this past year. By sending

Blespor away for the night, Santa could decorate the North Pole for the party.

Wilzor's role was to play along with Blespor. So far, Wilzor felt like he was doing a good job.

The next morning, Wilzor fulfilled his promise and awoke Blespor early. After a hardy breakfast of scrambled eggs (not chicken, but penguin eggs), bacon and toast, Wilzor and Blespor left for the mistletoe farm.

"What a beautiful morning," thought Blespor.

"There must have been a light snow last night because everything looks like it has been sprinkled with flour."

The mistletoe farm was a short distance from Wilzor's house. Blespor had a way with spotting perfect mistletoe. He viewed the farm quickly and then moved towards a patch of mistletoe near the back.

Blespor smelt the plant and then shook the leaves.

"Yep, this is it," said Blespor. They paid for the mistletoe and returned to Wilzor's house.

When they returned, a deer attached to Blespor's wooden sled was stationed in front of Wilzor's house.

The note attached to the sled read:

*Blespor,*

*Please use this sled for your return home.*

*Santa*

Blespor read the note and then said, "Boy, Santa really confuses me sometimes. Why couldn't I have just taken the sled with me on the way up?"

"I have no idea," lied Wilzor, and with that Wilzor went into his house and closed the door, his face planted with a huge smile.

Blespor looked at his watch.

"Well, I know now that I'll return home with enough time," thought Blespor. He mounted the sled and took off.

(3 hours later)

Blespor was excited about being back in the North Pole. When he entered the city limits, he noticed something different. There were streamers plastered all over the city.

He heard someone yell "Get ready" but Blespor paid no attention. He was still trying to figure out why there were so many streamers decorating the city.

From what seemed to be out of no where, Santa, all the elves, Mrs. Claus, and the reindeer shouted, "Surprise Blespor!" This startled Blespor so much that he fell right off the sled. The snow sure felt cold on Blespor's behind.

"What's all this?" asked Blespor, wiping the snow

from his back.

"It's a surprise fro you to thank you for all your hard work," said Santa.

"We've finished all the toys for you so you can relax for the big ride tonight," said Elmer, an elf.

A tear fell from Blespor's eye.

"You are the best friends an elf could have.

Thanks from the bottom of my heart," said Blespor.

Back in Blustaria...

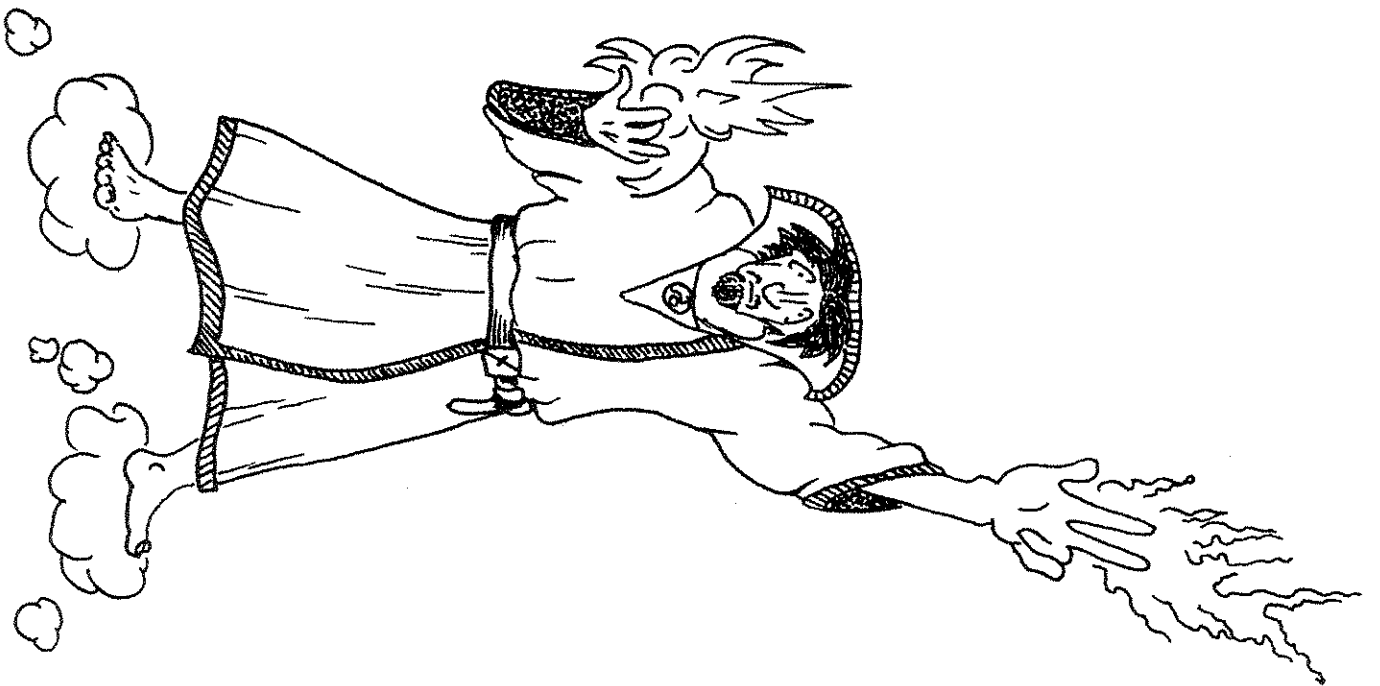
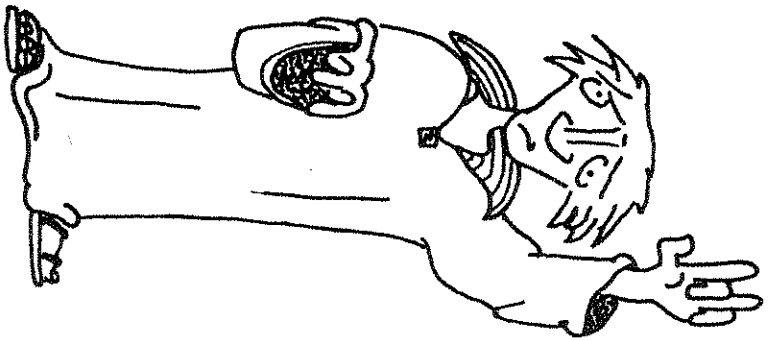
Wilzor stepped out to get the mail.

"Oh, no," said Wilzor. "He forgot the mistletoe!"

By Cristina Higareda







## Life Without Her

"I don't understand," Renee said as she looked at me, "why is he like this? I give him everything and he just hits me. I don't get it!" As I listened to her voice sound so hurt and astonished that her boyfriend Brad would actually beat her, the high school beauty.

I listened not really knowing how to treat this matter. She was my best friend and I loved her like she was my sister. She always came to me for advice and this time I didn't quite know what to say to a best friend.

I stood there blank as Renee looked at me with her blue eyes and said, "I can't take much more of this, what are my parents going to say when they see the black eye he gave me. I love with all my heart Rickkie, but if this keeps up I will surely kill myself. At that moment, I knew it was serious and I had to do something.

"I'll do what I can," I said. Standing there and looking at her bruised face, covered with the makeup I had given her to use.

Flipping her long brown hair, she looked at me and said the words I would always remember, "Rickkie, remember, you're my best friend!" With this she gave me her smile trying to make it look as if she was happy now. She then turned and walked towards home. I stood there

for a moment not knowing what to say or to think. I started for home.

When I got home, the phone was ringing. I picked it up, and there was his voice, "Where is the little \*\*\* at?"

I sighed and said, "What a nice hello coming from a jerk like you. She's not here. She's probably home by now."

He then snapped back, "I know Renee's there, and tell her I'm waiting. I have more important people to see. I am fine, and I could get any girl I wanted. Tell her that if she doesn't come home soon, I'm going to give her something to remember and I'll go and find myself a new girl."

I stood there in my kitchen and wondered how a sweet girl like Renee could get caught up with a jerk like Brad Medেকে. I hung up.

I called Renee's house as fast as I could to warn her that Brad was coming over and he was not in a good mood. It rang a few times, and then the answering machine picked it up. I left a message and went up to my room.

Setting my books of the desk, I laid down on the bed and thought about the day when Brad and Renee met.

It was July 5th, and the day was hot. Renee asked me to go to her country club and swim with her.

Renee was, what she liked to call, well-off. Being the daughter of the president of Price Enterprise, Inc., a successful architectural design company that designed everything from houses to office buildings, didn't hurt either.

I was what you would call middle-class. Both my parents and I worked and we enjoyed what we were doing. Making close to \$6 an hour and living in a rented house in our little town, Carton. It was about 15 minutes away from Council Bluffs.

I agreed awkwardly, and we were off. The pool was crowded and Renee immediately was bing asked out by the guys who were obviously conceited jerks. Then she spotted him across the room waiting on a table. We got closer to him by sitting in his section. After looking at us for a moment, he came over.

Me, not being the shy one, spoke up, "I'd like some water and she'd like a date with you."

He looked at me with an unusual grin, and said that he was bout to ask her that anyway. From then on, they were a couple.

Three months later, the trouble began. Renee started to act weird. She dropped out of cheerleading and wrestling, and it was only me. I remember the day I found out that Brad was beating her. Renee was at my house, and had asked to borrow my Cashmere sweater,

and I said yes. When she took off her blouse, I noticed he lashed and bruises on her back.

I shouted, "What happened to you! You look like you've been through a meat grinder." She broke down and told me that Brad had been beating her for the last two months.

I ran out to my parents can, not even sixteen yet, and raced to Brad's house. I walked into his house and demanded to know what in the heck he thought he was doing, beating Renee. And if he came within three feet of he, I would have him arrested. He shook his head and walked out, and said that he didn't know what I was talking about, and that he had to go to work. I stood there, not knowing how to react to what he had said. I drove home, hoping that there wasn't a cop nearby.

Waking from my thoughts by the phone, I had a bad feeling that something terrible was going to occur. It was the police, calling for me. The proceeded to tell me the story that Brad had gone to Renee's house, and stayed about 10 minutes. Renee had then gone into her room, laid down with a .44 magnum, and killed herself. When I heard the word "killed", I got hysterical, and started to cry.

Then I remembered her last words to me, "Rickie, remember, you're my best friend."

I then proceeded to tell the police about Brad, and

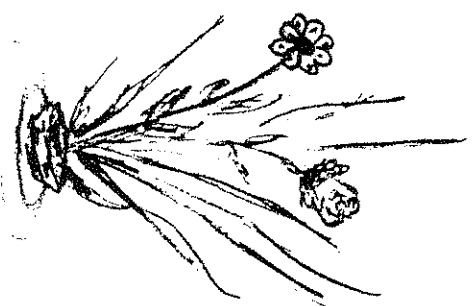
about her saying that if it kept up, she was going to kill herself. They told me to stop by the station, that she had left a letter for me. Then they said they were sorry, and hung up.

I stood there in he kitchen and screamed at the God who we loved, and he took her away from me. What would I do without her?

I started a club for battered teens. I still wonder why I didn't stop him, but it's no use. I don't know how life went on with out Renee, I never really recovered from it.

Tell me, why do teenagers have so many insecurities that they have to hurt the ones that love them the most. Suicide isn't the way out, but what exactly is the way out? She really loved him.

By Rickkie Hamby



## Story

My clock read 6:00 a.m. and the sun was bursting through the small window above my bed. I watched the dust dance in the rays that formed a kaleidoscope on my wall. As I was lying there, pondering the events that had changed my life recently, a sharp pain tore through my protruding belly. I bit my tongue to keep from crying out, and felt a tear roll down my face as the salty taste of blood filled my mouth. My mother was calling me, I could smell bacon frying and hear her slamming pans as she made breakfast for the five of us. I admired my mother, she was a single mother at the age of fifteen and had raised us all in a disciplined, religious, well kept home. She had struggled, and everything she did, she had done for us. As I opened my bedroom door, I could hear music blaring from the Puerto Ricans down the hall. I chased my way to the bathroom and ran water into the tub. As I lowered myself into the steaming bath, I could hear my sisters waking up and Austin, my sixteen year old sister Kerri's baby, cry out for his bottle. As the familiar sounds pulsed through my ears, I slowly drifted into my own little world...

The subway station was just around the corner, that's where I had agreed to meet Reuben. As I walked

along the littered sidewalks, I could feel my too small sweatshirt stretching across my belly, and sense people passing by staring at me in wonder. I didn't care, let them stare, they knew nothing about me. Hadn't they ever seen a pregnant woman before? There was Reuben, running towards me with his beautiful smile. He lifted me off the ground and covered my face with kisses, I loved my Reuben...

I couldn't believe the number of people in the mall, or the prices on all the things I needed for the baby. Reuben had agreed to help, but his part time job didn't pay the kind of money you needed for a baby. We knew the baby was going to be a girl, so we bought her pajamas, blankets, clothes, bottles, and a ton of diapers. These seemed to be no end to the list of things we needed for her, it just kept getting longer and longer. Reuben and I had lunch at Hardees and then he had to go to work so I rode the subway home, alone. I watched the tunnels go from clean and graffiti free to littered and graffiti covered as we rode into the south side stations. It saddened me to think that the people in the north side didn't care one bit about what happened on the south side as long as it didn't filter into their neighborhoods... My clock read 6:00 a.m. and the sun was bursting through the small window above my bed. I watched the dust dance in the rays that formed a kaleidoscope on my

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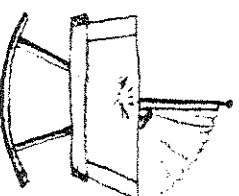
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As I walked into our apartment, I was greeted by the smell of cookies baking. All of my sisters were in the kitchen making christmas cookies and my mom was locked in her room wrapping everyone's presents. I helped my sisters ice the cookies and arrange them on a christmas platter, then went to my room to wait for Reuben to call. On my way upstairs I heard Austin waking up, so I picked him up out of his crib and held him close. As I rocked him back to sleep, I imagined how it

would be to rock my own baby to sleep when she woke, crying. The shrill ringing of the phone brought me back to earth and I laid Austin down to answer it. Reuben asked me how I was doing, and after about an hour of talking to him, mostly about the baby, we hung up with promises to see each other the next day. As I laid down to go to sleep I counted the days until my baby would be born. Only 23 days until I'll be able to rock my Alexis to sleep...

By Brooke Laird



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